BYAAAH!!!

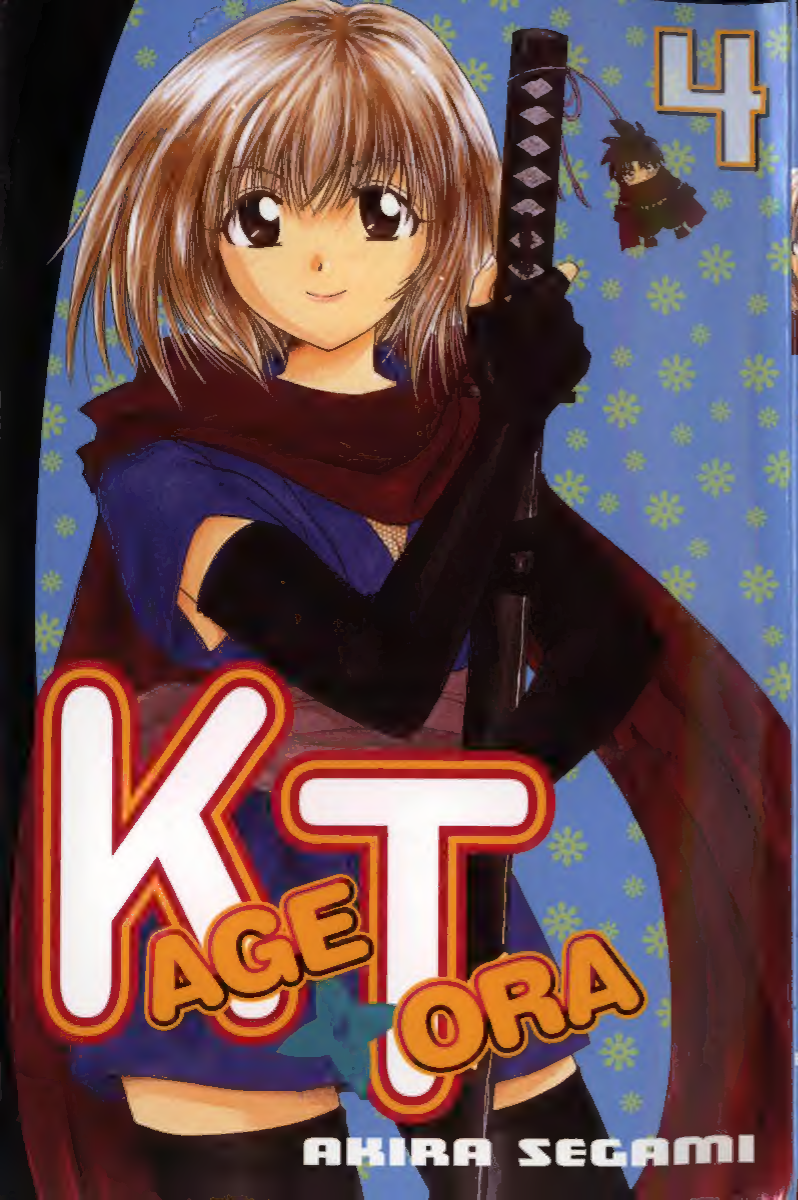
NO WEBSITE
NO MIRC
NO E-MAIL

HERE'S THE 4TH VOLUME OF THE MANGA: KAGE TORA
FOR THE FANS BY A FAN.
REMEMBER, IF YOU LIKE IT, GO BUY IT!
PAGES HAVE BEEN CROPPED TO GET RID OF THE GUTTER,
BUT IT'S STILL VISIBLE,
AS I REALLY DON'T CARE TOO MUCH ABOUT THE QUALITY.
SCANNED) CROPPED) CLEANED) SAVED.
ALSO I'VE DONE A QUICK JOB ON ANY DOUBLE PAGE SPREADS,
JUST TO MAKE IT EASIER TO READ.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE MY ATTEMPT, GO BUY IT FOR
YOURSELVES AND ENJOY YOUR OWN VERSION..
ANYHOW ENJOY!

NEXT UP: MORE KAGE
NOTE: SCANNED PER REQUEST.
EMO FOOL NOW OWES ME PORN :P
MORE TO COME SOON, WITH SOME NEW SERIES TOO.

TILL NEXT TIME, ENJOY!

RU



デルレイ

KAGE TORA 4

AKIRA SEGAMI

Ballantine Books

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Noble ninja Kagetora has an important duty: to protect and train young Yuki. Falling in love with her is not an option; unfortunately, it's a little too late for that. Things get *really* complicated when Yuki's cousin, a respected member of the Toudou martial arts family, comes to town to check out Kagetora . . . and she likes what she sees! Then Kagetora takes Yuki back home to his village, where she learns Kagetora's family secrets, bringing the two of them even closer. With the New Year approaching, can Kagetora keep his feelings for his charge under control . . . and keep from disgracing himself and his ninja clan?

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4
KAGETORA
AKIRA SEGAMI

KAGETORA
カゲトラ

Akira Segami

TRANSLATED BY
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LETTERED BY
Janice Chiang

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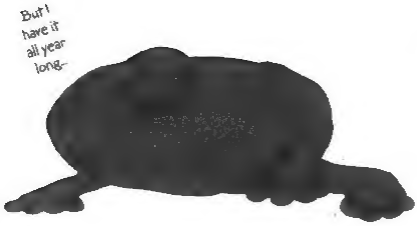
KAGETORA

A Note from the Author

SPRINGTIME SLUMBER



I got a hold of some good sake, so I'd like to bring it with me and go look at the flowers. Now the problem is my allergies and if I can take any time off of work...Hmm, what should I do?

Segami

Honorifics Explained

Throughout the Del Rey Manga books, you will find Japanese honorifics left intact in the translations. For those not familiar with how the Japanese use honorifics and, more important, how they differ from American honorifics, we present this brief overview.

Politeness has always been a critical facet of Japanese culture. Ever since the feudal era, when Japan was a highly stratified society, use of honorifics—which can be defined as polite speech that indicates relationship or status—has played an essential role in the Japanese language. When addressing someone in Japanese, an honorific usually takes the form of a suffix attached to one's name (example: "Asuna-san"), or as a title at the end of one's name or in place of the name itself (example: "Negi-sensei," or simply "Sensei!").

Honorifics can be expressions of respect or endearment. In the context of manga and anime, honorifics give insight into the nature of the relationship between characters. Many translations into English leave out these important honorifics and therefore distort the "feel" of the original Japanese. Because Japanese honorifics contain nuances that English honorifics lack, it is our policy at Del Rey not to translate them. Here, instead, is a guide to some of the honorifics you may encounter in Del Rey Manga.

-san: This is the most common honorific and is equivalent to Mr., Miss, Ms., or Mrs. It is the all-purpose honorific and can be used in any situation where politeness is required.

-sama: This is one level higher than "-san." It is used to confer great respect.

-dono: This comes from the word "tono," which means "lord." It is an even higher level than "-sama" and confers utmost respect.

-kun: This suffix is used at the end of boys' names to express familiarity or endearment. It is also sometimes used by men among friends, or when addressing someone younger or of a lower station.

-chan: This is used to express endearment, mostly toward girls. It is also used for little boys, pets, and even among lovers. It gives a sense of childish cuteness.

Bozu: This is an informal way to refer to a boy, similar to the English terms "kid" and "squirt."

Sempai/
Senpai: This title suggests that the addressee is one's senior in a group or organization. It is most often used in a school setting, where underclassmen refer to their upperclassmen as "sempai." It can also be used in the workplace, such as when a newer employee addresses an employee who has seniority in the company.

Kohai: This is the opposite of "sempai" and is used toward underclassmen in school or newcomers in the workplace. It connotes that the addressee is of a lower station.

Sensei: Literally meaning "one who has come before," this title is used for teachers, doctors, or masters of any profession or art.

[blank]: This is usually forgotten in these lists, but it is perhaps the most significant difference between Japanese and English. The lack of honorific means that the speaker has permission to address the person in a very intimate way. Usually, only family, spouses, or very close friends have this kind of permission. Known as yobisute, it can be gratifying when someone who has earned the intimacy starts to call one by one's name without an honorific. But when that intimacy hasn't been earned, it can be very insulting.

KAGETORA
カゲトラ

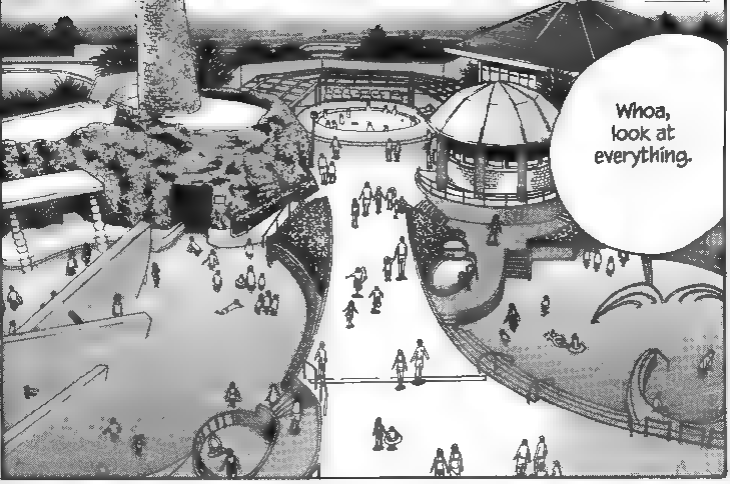
4

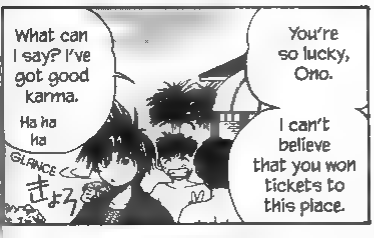
瀬上あきら
(せがみ)

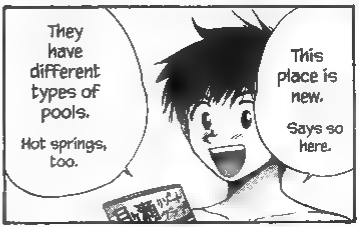
Summer Vacation!!
The beach!
SPLASH
A resort!

#16 Swimsuit Competition

KAGETORA
カゲトラ


Whoa, look at everything.


What can I say? I've got good karma.
Ha ha ha
GLANCE
You're so lucky, Ono.
I can't believe that you won tickets to this place.


They have different types of pools.
Hot springs, too.
This place is new.
Says so here.

I was planning to, but...

FLIP!
KAGETORA, WEREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO KEEP YOUR DISTANCE FROM HIME?
UKI KI

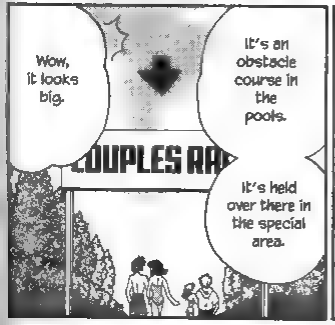
Looks like Hime can enjoy this place, too.
KYE.

I was really looking forward to this year's summer break.
I wanted to go see a lot of things...
...and hang out with you, Kagetora.
SO THAT MEANS IT ALL COMES DOWN TO YOUR SELF-CONTROL.
KYE.
Uh...
If that is what Hime wants...
I'll be okay.
CLENCH
For Hime I'll endure anything!!
Then that is what I shall give her.
Kosuke...
JBER WOR-RIED.
DON'T SAY JBER!
Wow!

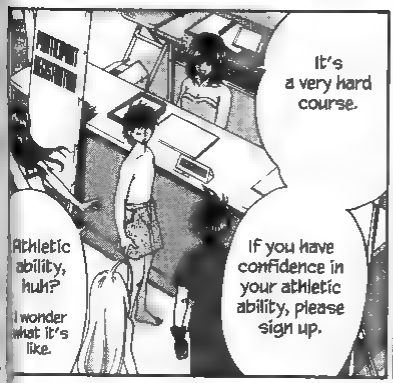
There are a lot of pools.
Looks fun.
Interesting ♪
ぼーっ
GAWK
. . . . . .
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE GOING TO BE OKAY?

Ono!!
Good job getting these tickets!!
You're the man!
Huh?
IDIOT!
I get it, but...
Oh Kagetora!
PIT PAT PIT
Where should we start?
There's so many, I can't decide.
Any one you like, Hime.
EXCITED
わくわく
But you can't go anywhere deep.
GLANCE
まよう
OH YEAH.
There's one with waves, there's a big slide...
They even have a waterfall.
Hey, Tora.
What's that over there?
HUH?
LOOK

COUPLES RACE
PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION
Couples Race?


Wow, it looks big.
It's an obstacle course in the pools.
It's held over there in the special area.

What kind of race is it?
Just one man and one woman are needed to participate.


PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION
Athletic ability, huh?
I wonder what it's like.
It's a very hard course.
If you have confidence in your athletic ability, please sign up.

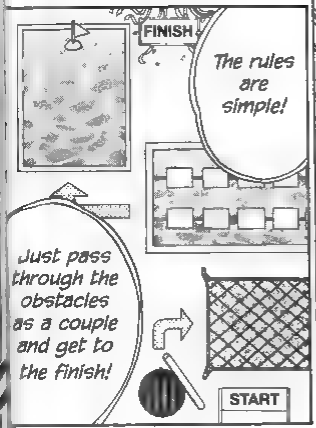
300,000?!
Huh?
And the winner receives 300,000 yen* plus other prizes.

*¥3,000

I WANT A MOTORCYCLE.
The prize money is well worth it.
But a man and a woman, huh?
I SEE.
That's a race made for me.
I'm a ninja, after all.
You want to participate, too?
That's true. You could win with Kagetora...
He's a ninja, after all.
If it's you and me, we'll win for sure!
Huh?
Tora! Let's try it!
It looks fun, but...
It might be tough if it requires athletic ability.
Hmm
What's up?
Huh?
Aki-chan...
I think I'll do it, too!
Doesn't it?
It does look fun.
To me.

Huh?
HIME-?
You think I can do this, too?
I think it'll be tough.
You need athletic ability.
That's the one thing she doesn't have.
But it looks fun...
しゅん
SAD
I GUESS I CAN'T DO IT.
Hime!
I'll do it with you!
Huh?
I'll support you, so don't worry!
ニコ
SMILE
...who could sign up with Yuki-chan..
I guess Kagetora's the only one...
Kagetora...

Then I guess I'll take Kamijo-kun...
So that means you're joining me, Ono!!
Huh!?
ME!?
Take care of Yuki for me!
Okay, then I'll do it with someone else.
THROW IN
GRAB
PAT
Let's do it, Kagetora!
SMILE
I wonder if we'll be okay...
STARE
COUPLES RACE REGISTRATION FORM
And now the moment you've been waiting for!!
Okay!! I'll do it for Hime!
COUPLES R
She looks so happy...
Yes.
GIGGLE


FINISH
The rules are simple!
Just pass through the obstacles as a couple and get to the finish!
START

We're starting the Couples Race!!

NO. 7
Just leave it to me.
If you say so...
NO. 6
You gotta be joking.
We win or you die!
I'm getting a bit nervous.
NO. 5
I need to support Hime!!

The lady will be blindfolded, so it's up to the man to lead her the right way.
FIRST OBSTACLE: WATER-MELON CRACKING
BANG
Ready, set...
GO!!

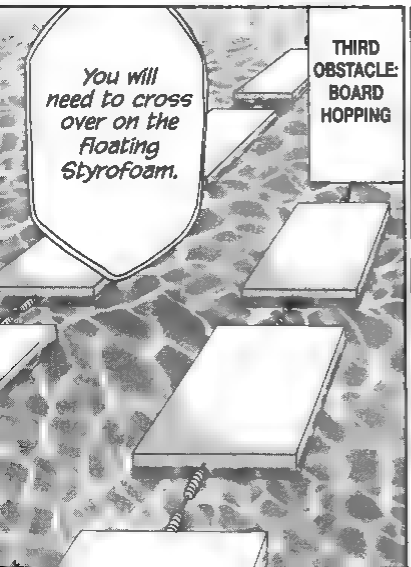
Take that!
CRUSH
Number 6 is powerful!
She crushed that watermelon to pieces!
HEH
THAT WAS EASY.
SHE'S SO SCARY.
Super slice!!
SLICE
Number 7 is also amazing!!
The watermelon is cut perfectly in half!
WHOA!
WITHOUT HER PARTNER'S HELP, EITHER!!
Whaaaat?
We can't do that!
That's too hard.
You can just do it normally.
BUZZ
BUZZ
Hime!
This way.

Yah!
SWING
TRIP
Whoaaa!!
Hime!!
FLAP
FLAP
CRUSH
YOU NEED TO CRAWL.
You need to pass through the net.
SECOND OBSTACLE: NET PASSING
It counts!!
IT COUNTS!?
Number 5 tackles the watermelon!
It broke...

It's humid.
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
And something's sticky.
The net?
By the way, the net has a special birdlime on it.
What?!
Oh!
Kiritani... your bikini top...
Stop looking!!
LIGHT
Whoa! Couple Number 6 is fighting!!

Whoa! It looks like the girls are struggling!!
Eek!
Ew.
Is Hime okay!?
PASSED THROUGH EASILY
I'm glad I'm not participating.
SMIRK
=ニヤリ...
There's a lot of money at stake, so we need to make it hard. ♡
STICK
!!
Whoa...

Whoa! A mysterious wind sweeps the net!!
Hoorai style... Art of the Ninja, Whirlwind!!
Aaagh!!
Noooo!
WHOOOSH
WHIRL


THIRD OBSTACLE: BOARD HOPPING
You will need to cross over on the floating Styrofoam.

Hime! Are you okay?
Yeah.
I'M FINALLY OUT.
TMP
TMP

Many people are out of the race now.
That was definitely Kagetora's doing.
It's gotta be...
WHOOSH
WHIRL
THAT WIND
KYE

Yah!
JUMP
WOBBLE
SPLASH
Of course, interference is allowed!!
If one of the pair falls, you will be disqualified.
Ugh.
REACH
Couple number 7 is fast! They're in first place!
TUG
They're easily jumping from board to board.
JUMP

Huh?
Whoa! A wardrobe malfunction!
FLOP

And he falls!
GEEZ
SPLASH!

WHACK!
He was attacked by both girls!
You pervert!
Oof!

There are only a few couples left.
Ouch ouch ouch ouch!!
Kirita!!
DRAG
DRAG
DRAG
DRAG
FOURTH OBSTACLE: THREE-LEGGED RACE
This is the last obstacle.
The man will carry the lady on his shoulders and try to get to the other side.
TA-DAH!
FIFTH OBSTACLE: CAVALRY BATTLE
Everyone ready?
Of course, once again, interference is allowed!!
Let's Fight♡
WHOA...
うわぁ

Are you okay? I know I'm heavy.
It's absolutely no problem, Hime.
It's a big problem for my self-control though!!
Kagetora...
This is the fifth and final obstacle!
Good luck Fighting!
Like martial arts?
Fighting??
I'm not good at this...
Urgh
I'm getting nervous.
Don't worry.
I'll protect you, Hime...
That's wrong.
Huh?

We're gonna win together.
So I'll work hard, too!
Right?
.....
Yes!!
Ready...
GO!!
BANG
And the horses dash out!
SPLASH
Don't forget...if you fall off your horse, you lose.
Let's see which couple wins the cash and prizes!!
Horse!?
SPLASH

Okay, Ono! You better move to make up for seeing my boobs!!
Stop complaining!
It wasn't on purpose!!
I'll take care of the enemies.
PAPAU
KICK
Number 6 is strong!!
CLENCH
SPLASH
Aki-chan is amazing...
SMILE
Yah!
Yikes!
GRASP
TOUCH

Huh?
スリッ
SLIP
Oh, sorry...
Whoa
グラッ
WOBBLE
ガシ!
GRAB!
わた
TURN
わた
TURN
oooo!!
ime!
Kya!!
IT'S COMING OFF!
Oh no, this is not good...
I guess I have to do it!

Whoa, what's happening!?
ARGH!
AHHH!
Hoorai Style... Art of the Ninja, Atomic Splash!!
ちゅど——ん
BOOM!
PUSH
PHEW!
That surprised me.
ぎゅっ
SQUEEZE
Kagetora!
WHAT'S WRONG!?
Urgh.
GURGLE
GURGLE

Oh, we can use our ninja attacks?
That'll be much faster...
...than doing this. ♪
Kyaaa!?
WISK
Anything goes as long as I don't fall, right?
JUMP
Huh? What?
TMP
Huh?
What is Sakuya doing...?
Don't move!
Hoorai style...Art of the Ninja...
WHIP
!

Water Lily Flurry!!
SPLASHHH
Urgh...
That did.
Hoorah! Style...

Art of the Ninja, Water Wall!!
!?
BOOM
What the...!?
Whoa!
SPLASH
Why did you stop me?
YOU RUINED MY ATTACK
WHAT IF NINE GETS HURT?
If you use Water Lily Flurry, people will get injured!!

Oh.
Oh, Yuki-chan. Are you okay?
Kagetora, Sakuya-chan.
I'm okay, but...
I don't get it, but I think the race is cancelled.
Whoops.
I did that.
HUH?
AHHHHH

I'm sorry, everyone.
I got too excited and forgot myself.
It's okay. Don't worry about it.
We're used to it because of Kagetora.
But I wonder what the prize was...
OTHER THAN THE MONEY
It probably wasn't something good...
THE MC WAS SCARY, TOO
That race wasn't very good either.
WHIRRR...
BANG!
See? Look at all this!!
Yay ♡
Hey.
We bought the Fireworks.
SIZZLE
IT'S DANGEROUS TO POINT FIREWORKS AT PEOPLE
CRUNCH
SORRY WE'RE LITE
OH, THERE THEY WERE

yay!
Okay, time for fireworks!
Look at it go!!
SHOOOOOOOO
WHOA!
It's too much...
Kiritani, that's dangerous.
ALTHOUGH IT'S FUN
TIE
which one should start with?
MOUSE TAIL FIREWORKS X10
Whoa!
Shoot thirty in a row!
BOOM
BOOM
Don't shoot near us!
Tamaya
BANG
WOW
WHISPER

Look, Kagetora.
This one's pretty.
Hime looks like she's having fun.
I'm glad.
The color changes.
's so cool!
It's just too bad we couldn't win the race.
SIGH
If we won, Hime would've been happier...
It's too bad we couldn't win, though...
Huh? Uh... yeah.
This is fun, but the race was fun, too.

I'm no disappoin
So why aren't you disappointed?
Yeah.
But Hime, you wanted to participate.
Huh?
Huh!?
I don't get it.
I wasn't interested in the prize or anything.
If you don't win, you don't get anything.
TURN
I told you before.
I...
SIZZLE
Then why...

I wanted to spend time with you.
I wanted fun memories...
...of us spending the summer together.

So today...
I had lots of fun.
Memories together...
SIZZ...
Oh.
It's done.
There's more over here.
Really?
Then I'll play with more
I hope we can make more of them...
Hime...

Kagetora!
Let's do this one next.
One hundred shots in a row!
IS IT GOING TO BE SAFE?
WHAT'S THAT!?
Of course!!
We'll have more fun tomorrow!
We'll make more memories.
Yup!

KAGETORA
カゲトラ
#17 Scary Person

Today I want you and Yuki...
...to go to Touka Shrine.
Kagetora.
Touka Shrine?
It is a custom for the Toudou family to go twice a year to clean it.
There is a god of martial arts enshrined there, and there are various dedicated weapons there donated by us.
It's a shrine related to the Toudou family.
And I shall...
Yes, please help her.
But from now on I think I would like Yuki to handle it.
Up until now I was doing it.

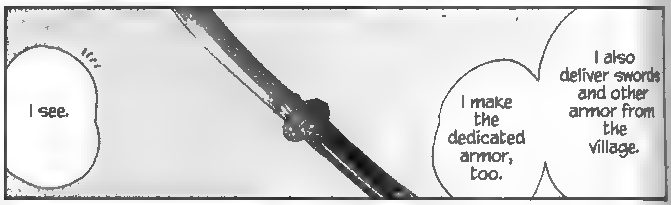
Yuki, are you ready?
Yes!
Yes, ma'am.
Where is Hime now?
Does this look okay?
It's my first time wearing a Miko outfit.

She looks really different.
She looks really good.
In the Miko outfit.
That's fine
Stace?
.....
Wow
Oh
She has a little bit of makeup on, too...
Kagetora...
Do I look funny?
In this outfit?
No!
You look great!!
Really, it looks excellent!!
Good.
Hee hee
I know it's just a big cleaning...
But always dress up.

Taka!
I'll leave the rest up to him.
Him?
STAND
I guess both of you are ready.
...is at your service.
Taka from Hoorai...
Yes!
TAP
Why are you in Tokyo?
Taka-san!?
Brother Taka!?

It's been a while, hasn't it, Hime-sama?
Since the winter? In the village of Hoorai?
I'm glad to see you well.
SMILE
Your speech is so formal.
And you look well too, Kagetora.
PINCH
Ow ow OW OW!!
As your older brother, I always worry that you are causing them trouble.
Ha ha ha
WHAT DID THIS MOUTH SAY?
They are close, aren't they?
Unnnm...
BROTHER SHIPPO WANTED TO SEE YOU, TOO!
GA GA GA GA
Brother Taka.
Well, Taka, I'll leave the rest to you.
Yes, ma'am!
SING

This is part of my usual rounds. I'm in charge of these kinds of things.
Oh.
Why are you here in Tokyo?
Are you here to help?
Yeah?


I see.
I make the dedicated armor, too.
I also deliver swords and other armor from the village.

Please stop pinching my cheeks!!
ぎゅむ
PINCH
MAKES ME SO SAD
OUCH OUCH
You mean to say that you didn't know what your brother does?
Huh?

Hey.

Oh.
Here it is, Kagetora.

I wonder what he does...
I'm pretty busy, you know.
I have... work to do...
STING
AND PREPARATIONS

Touka Shrine!

Today the priest is gone so you can work hard without disturbing anyone.
Go for it.
That's why you have to clean it.
WOW
It's a pretty old shrine.
But huge...

SMILE
I have to eliminate some...
Oh, I mean... have some Toudou-related work.
Huh?
Where to?
So I'll leave it to you, Kagetora.
I'm going to go in
I have to go out.
Me?

I'm here alone with Hime!?
Wait. So if Brother Taka is leaving...
BR-DUM
I wonder what kind of duty he has...
FIRST I'LL START WITH HIM.
ELIMINATE?
This shrine is so old it looks like it's haunted.
A lot of old shrines are haunted.
GRASP
Alone with Hime in a haunted place!!
Kagetora...
You're scared, aren't you?
So I brought you something good.
You've always been scared of things like this.
N-no, I-I'm not.
TREMBLE
Urgh...
RUSTLE
?

Is this the special sake from the village!?
I recognize the smell.
Yeah.
Here you go.
!
TA-DAH
Drink that and you'll stay awake through the night.
LEGAL DRINKING AGE IS 20!!
Thank you.
I SEE
IT'S FOR YOU
It's too strong for others but perfect for us ninjas.
We are trained professionally, so sake doesn't get us drunk.
Thank you. It looks like I'll be using this.
Sake...
THE ALCOHOL CONTENT IS HIGH
Kagetora, I brought the materials.
TMP
TMP
Okay then, Hime-sama. Have fun.
Yup.
You too, Kagetora.
Have a safe trip!
I'll start with the yard.
With the broom.
You can start wherever you like, Kagetora.
Okay.

There's no time to be scared.
I need to work and be useful to Hime!
GRIP
I guess I'll start with storage.
It looks like a lot of work.
SWISH
SWISH
SWISH
.....

SEALED
MENACE
SEALED
I didn't want to remember that.
STUPID BROTHER TAKA
A lot of shrines are haunted.
All these things look very fishy...
SUSPICIOUS
ふさり
WOW.
...lo...I'm okay.
THUMP
THUMP
Are you okay?
I'M SORRY I SCARED YOU!
!!
I finished the yard.
So I'll help here.
GASP
You think so too, Hime?
MENACE
There's lots of scary things in here.
WOW.

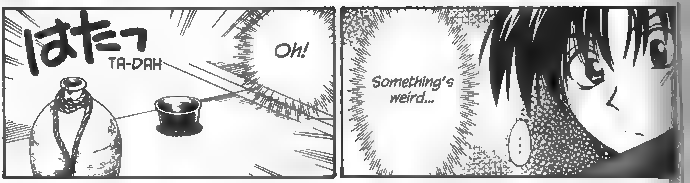
Um... no...not really...
URGH
Are you scared?
Oh.
I Feel like a wimp...
DON'T SAY NO
Yeah...
I'll hold your hand.
You're scared of ghosts and stuff, huh?
I Forgot. Let's go.
So we'll do the rest tomorrow.
I just need to make it through the night...
Good night!
WAVE
Okay.
Hime, you can sleep in the other room.
I'll stay here in the main room.

Good night, Hiime!
Although...
...I won't be sleeping tonight.
I'll just drink and stay awake all night.
This sake
Oh
It must be the wind.
KA-THUNK
!
TH-THUMP
....
...maybe I should check if we locked the doors.
Ha ha...

I'll feel better if I'm busy.
WHOOO
PEEP
Kagetora?
Are you asleep yet?
Huh? He's not here...
がらーん
EMPTY
What's this?
it smells good...
But I wonder where he went?
I was scared, so I came here for company.
GLANCE
Is this juice?
Oh, it's good. ♡
LICK
I remember Kagetora holding this...

It's all in how you approach it.
CLENCH!!
I get scared because I think I'm scared.
Maybe I'll have some.
Hee hee
GLUG
GLUG
There's no such thing as ghosts!
!?
GASP
BOO!!
APPEAR
Huh!?
Hee hee hee! Surprised?
Uh...!!
SPEECHLESS

I'm a ghost!
Hee hee hee
にっか
SMILE
Hime!?
Ta-dah!


はたっ
TA-DAH
Oh!
Something's weird...

Huh? Why wouldn't I be?
BUNEP
Oh.
Are you okay!?
Which means she's drunk!?
Yup.
I had a small cup.
Hime... did you drink this?
IT WAS GOOD ♡
IT LOOKS A LITTLE EMPTY

Maybe I'm a little hot.
ぬぎっ
TAKE OFF
CK!?
あれ
WAVE
No, you can't!!
No! It's hot. I'm taking it off.
You can't!!
あれ
WAVE
Geez.
Fine then.

I'll take this off...
FLAP
ACK
Huh?
Hic
It won't come off...
Huh?
TUG
I'm sorry, Hime!
Ack!?
GRAB
Huh?
That's even worse!
Sorry.

That was close...
PANT
PANT
GOO
Urrg...
You're so mean.
It's hot.
It's taking all of my strength to keep my sanity.
I'm sorry, Hime, but...
Huh?
Fine.
SWISH
It's worse that we're alone here.
Sigh
!
....

Hime!?
Fight?
SWISH
Then we'll Fight!

Hime! That's too dangerous!
You'll get hurt!
DANGEROUS WEAPON
DRINK
Which means it's real!!
it was dedicated to this shrine!!
Where did she get that?
Gasp
Take...
I don't care...
HIC
Whoa!
DODGE
...that!!
SWING
Wait... Hime!!

...that!
BAM
Take...
This style... it's a lot like Saya's.
Like mother, like daughter...
This isn't the time to be impressed by her skill.
Hic
ZWISH
Whoa. watch it

Urgh, why can't I hit you?
Yah!!
SWING
BAM
BAM
BAM
Urk!
BAM
Whoa!
SWING
Urk...
SWING
SWING
SWING
!!
SPLISH
She's pretty good...
I'm having trouble dodging...

You say that, but...
IF I DON'T DODGE, IT'S DANGEROUS
Hey, if you dodge, I can't hit you.
Hic
Why is she better when she's drunk!?
How weird!
IT'S THE TOUDOU BLOOD IN HER...
I need to do something about that weapon.
...I can't even get near it!
SWING
SWING
Stop dodging!
But...
Yah!
SWING
I have no other choice!
DASH !!

Hime...
I'm sorry...
Oh...
GRIP
CLUNK

She finally let go.
Phew.
Sigh...
Huh? Kagetora?
Hic
Yes?
STARE
Please excuse my behavior!
Oh, I'm so sorry!!
GASP
CLANG
!!
THE WIND
GASP
TOUCH

Are you scared?
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
Your heart is beating fast...
Huh? Scared of what...?
HE
TH-THUMP
TWITCH
No, it's not...
GIGGLE
It's okay.

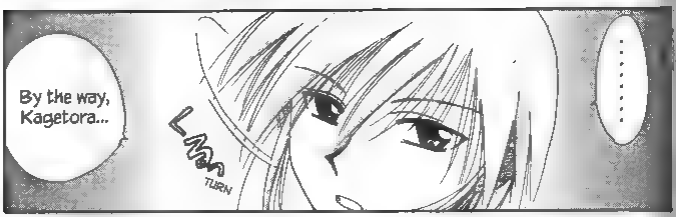
Hime!?
ギュッ
SQUEEZE
ぴとっ
CUDDLE
See? You're not scared anymore, right?
You still don't have courage?
TH-THUMP

!!
You're such a coward...
TH-THUMP
SQUEEZE

I...
...I don't want you to think of me like that.
Then...
...can you show me you're not?
PAT
Okay?
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
Hime?
.....

I come back early...
...and what do I see?
Ack!!
Brother Taka!?
Um, no, this isn't...
Umm...
GASP
ZZZ
Um...I guess Hime accidentally drank the sake.
She's fast asleep. What happened?
ZZZZ...
GLANCE
She's sleeping...

She was also too strong for me...
OVERALL IT WAS A VERY SCARY EXPERIENCE...
It's too strong for a normal person.
THE BLOCHO REPENTANCE STICK IS HIGH
Oh, I see.


By the way, Kagetora...
TURN

!!!
GASP
No, of course not!

What is it?
COME
COME
?

WHISPER
Everything's okay, right?
Huh?
You didn't do anything to Hime-sama, did you?

What are you saying, Brother Taka?
Okay.
I believe you. Really.
But I had to ask. Because you never know.
Ha ha ha
...how so?
If it did ever happen, it would be a big disaster.
Hmm, let's see...
It would be disrespectful, and you might be exiled.
That's probably too mild. All kinds of things could happen, and...
Hmm...
.....
UNDRESSENT
DRID
Of course!!
But please be careful.
I'm sure that you understand the situation.
Phew...I almost lost it there.
TH... TH...
.....
So it is as I thought...
I see.

Well...
I scared him enough, so it should be fine. For now.
No, it's nothing.
Huh? What?
By the way, Kagetora...
What's with this?
MESSY
Oh.
I asked you to clean, didn't I?
TIMID
Um... that is...
Kagetora.

† CARPENTER † NO MEMORY † ONLY OBSERVING.

Shoot.
KAGETORA
Well, maybe I can train a little...
Hime is probably not here yet.
I was going to train before practicing with Hime...
But I ran a little late.
And I sense someone...
Huh?
It's open.
Hime?
Are you here already?

KAGETORA
カゲトーラ

#18 Weak Kagetora

Are you, Kagetora-kun?
.....
Wh-Why do you know my name!?
は?!
GASP!
I knew it!
ポン
CLAP
You knew... what?
スタ
TMP
スタ
TMP
Who is this lady?
ピタ
STOP

She's very pretty...
?
I see.
SIGH
Excuse me.
What the...!?
TOUCH
You look thin but you are very toned. Just as a ninja should be.
I see.
SMILE
Uh... um...
GAPE
GAPE

Tomoe onee-chan!?
!
Hime!
Onee-chan?
Yuki-chan!!
DASH
It's been a while! How are you?
I'm good! But why are you here?
I didn't know you were coming.
But... you've grown so much since I last saw you.
I had some business to take care of.
Or maybe not...
Not really...
ちまっ
SMALL
Urgh.
But I grew a little bit!
Ha ha ha
Sorry, sorry.
Um...

I'm sorry.
I forgot to introduce myself.
Huh? You don't know?
Hime.
Who is this person?
I am Tomoe Toudou.
Well then.
Nice to meet you, Kagetora-kun.
Her cousin... that means...
...she's part of the Toudou family...
はっ
GASP
And I'm Yuki-chan's cousin. I'm three years older than her.
I am the assistant instructor to the Toudou-style Aiki Jujitsu faction.

I came here to see you.
I know.
HHH
BOW
Excuse my behavior. I am Kagetora of Hoorai.
My official duty is to serve as Hime's martial arts instructor...
See me?
But I was busy with school and other things.
I couldn't come until now.
But I finally made the time.
Giggle
When I heard from Auntie about your instructor...
I wanted to come and see how strong he was.
Tomoe Onee-chan, you need something from Kagetora?

So that's the reason I came.
Huh?
I wanted to see him personally.
Can I ask for a quick match?
Kagetora-kun?
Yes, ma'am!

Yah!!
WHACK!
DASH
GIGGLE
Then...
Playing hard to get.
WHACK
WHACK

How about this!?
PHEW
!
SWING
TMP
WOOSH

INHALE
She's pretty good.
No wonder she's the assistant instructor.
WHACK
Hee hee...

It's been awhile since I had a battle this fun.
Me, too.
ZWISH!
Oh.
That's an honor coming from a trained ninja.
They look like they're having fun.
But Tomoe onee-chan is really amazing.
I could never do that.
I can't believe she can hold her own against Kagetora.
She's always been strong.
DON'T CRY
CAN'T WIN

...choo!
Ah...
SNIFFLE
Oh!
Hime!?
WHAM!
CRACK
GRAB
Kagetora-kun!
Ow...

My mistake.
CRUNCH
Ow...
It hurts.
I'm sorry, I didn't realize...
Yes...
Are you okay?
Are you hurt, Kagetora
No, it's not a big deal.
You dislocated your shoulder?
It's just dislocated.
I'll go get the first aid kit.
Oh, Hime...

Tomoe-dono, I'm fine.
PUT IT BACK
Huh?
PA!
Let me see.
This needs to be taken care of right away.
No!
Just let me look!!
Okay...
Good.
Okay...

It looks fine to me.
.....
But you shouldn't use this arm for the rest of the day.
I... feel... a little strange...
You should cancel your practice today.
No, I can't do that.
Stop!
Just trust me!
ZIP
!

To-
To-Tomoe-
dono!
Huh?
I got it! I
understand!
So...
Please let
go of me!
わた
SHAKE
SHAKE
I brought
the first
aid kit.
Oh!
Thanks,
Yuki-
chan.
Good.
Good.
THUMP
TH-
THUMP
...Urgh...
Geez.
I can't be
myself when
I'm around
her.
Do you
have a fever,
Kagetora?
Your face
is red.
GLANCE
HA
HA
Huh?
No, I'm
fine.

Why don't you rest in your room?
Huh...
I'll put a cold pack on it, okay?
Oh
Thank you...
It's okay, I'll look after your practice today.
Oh, okay.
Maybe I should stay here until practice ends.
No! You're hurt!
You should go rest!
Okay?
Okay, I shall go rest...
Okay.
I hope he's okay...

Are you okay, Yuki-chan?
No, it's nothing.
Okay! Let's practice!!
. . . . . .
Ow...
It still hurts a little...
Hmm
GRIP
I was stupid.
I can't believe she was able to defeat me.
SPLASH

SLIDE
Huh?
WHISPER
I guess she's an attractive lady.
She's strong and pretty...
Tomoe-dono...
!!?
Tomoe-dono!?
Oh, there you are.

This side is for men!!
あわ
PANIC
あわ
PANIC
Ladies are next door...
know.
Huh!?
You know?
I thought you'd have trouble washing yourself.
I'll wash your back.
Come here.
!!
ぶくん
TH-THUMP

You don't have to resist!
N—no thank you!
すとん
SIT
Oh.
PUSH
Come on! Sit here!!
.....
SMILE
SMILE
I wonder why I can't resist her...
Stupid me.
SCRUB
SCRUB

You have a lot of scars. Do they hurt?
Well... a little. But I have to deal with it.
I can't train if I'm scared of scars.
I see...
TOUCH
きゅっ
SQUEEZE

Hey! Don't move! I'm sending my spiritual energy.
Tomoe-dono!?
What...
It's the Toudou style of healing.
If you do this, it'll heal a little faster.
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
Even if that's true...
Urgh ...
I can't take it anymore...
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
Tomoe-dono, I'm all right now, so...
Is that so?

You must have trained hard...
...to get this many scars.
That's really attractive.
I like...
...men like that.
Huh...
TH-THUMP
"Like..."?
STARE
She probably doesn't mean much by that.
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
Um... Tomoe-dono?
.....
Sagetora-kun...

What do you think of me?
That's not what I mean.
What... you mean...
Well... I think you're strong. Very suitable for an assistant instructor...
Huh!?
TH-THUMP
Do you hate me?
Kagetora-kun...
!
TOUCH

TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
Then... do you like me?
Um... no...not really...
Um...
Uh... That is...
!?
What if...
...I said that I like you?

Tomoe-dono likes me!?
Okay...?
Answer me like a man.
If that is what you really feel...
...I...
Tomoe-dono...

I can't return your feelings.
To me... Hime is... the most important person to me.
Maybe it wasn't a good idea to say that to someone from the Toudou family!!
Wait.
GASP
!!
I'm not good enough...
That's too bad.
Really...

GIGGLE
Tomoe-dono, you're a very attractive person.
So, um, you know...
あれ
PANIC
Um, but...
あれ
PANIC
わしっ
SQUEEZE
Okay, you passed!!
Tomoe-dono!!
Okay, now that my business is done, I should go.
?
?
スッ
TAP
?!
Tomoe-dono?
SQUEEZ

So... what was your business?
I said at the start.
I came to see you.
SMACK
That was an extra. GIGGLE
The real reason...
To battle...
But we already battled earlier.
...was to see with my own eyes.
What you were like.

...I can leave Yuki-chan with.
If you were someone
Yuki-cha is very importan to me.
Like a little sister.
Tomoe onee-chan.
So I was worried sick.
Please take care of Yuki-chan.
WHISPER
!
I can leave her in your hands.
But I'm relieved.
So that was the reason...

She must really like Hime...
Tomoe-dono...
Oh, but...
If you'd said those words about me, I would've been happy.
GIGGLE
The words I said?
WHICH ONES?
DUMBFOUNDED
TMP
TMP
Oh, there you are.
Hime
I made tea so I was looking for you.
SMILE

Good luck!
Tomoe onee-chan!?
Whoa
SQUEEZE
Tomoe onee-chan...
I can go home in peace now.
You have a good person near you.
Huh? With what...?
She left...
Tomoe onee-chan...
She is a very smart and pretty person.
I know.
Hee hee

Hmm...
He was uch better than I xpected...
She's someone I admire very much!
Darn.
GIGGLE
Too bad he wasn't mine.
Meanwhile...
Huh?
Bath?
WHO WERE YOU IN THE BATH WITH EARLIER, KAGETORA?
KYE
stup'd osuke!!
I'll come back soon. ♪

KAGETORA
カゲトラ
#19 Reason for Smiling

SHWIP
Okay...
Huh?
TIGER
What a nice day
Are you going somewhere?
Yes, to Hoorai.
I'm going to go see someone.
Who?
Huh?
Are you ready, too?
KYE!
JUMP!
Then let's go.

My...
...mother...
Hoorai Village

Kazama House
Kagetora...
You should have told us ahead of time...
...that Hime-sama was coming with you.
It was a last-minute decision.
Sorry.
Oh, it's my fault. I was the one who asked to meet her.
Meet?
Remember, Mother said...
...she wanted to say hi to Hime-sama? I just remembered.

Oh, right.
She did say something like that.
Then she'll be happy.
TURN
Sorry to rush you, but let's go. Brother Shirou is already there.
TMP
TMP
TMP
Kagetora, isn't your mother in the house?
No.
Mother is not in the house.
Huh?
Oh, there you are.
Oh? Hime-sama came along too?

KAZAMA HOUSEHOLD TOMB
This is...
Kureha Kazama.
It's been eight years since she passed away.
Today is the day she died.
Kagetora's mother...
...is dead...
It's been a while, Mother.
Toudou's Hime came to see you, too.
You're glad to see her, right Mother? ♪
CLAP
CLAP
Brother... clapping is inappropriate.
We're not worshipping a god here.
But seems happier this way.
Instead of just putting your hands together
But...

Kosuke!?
Stop him, brother!
Having fun, Nachi?
That's good.
PANT PANT PANT PANT
WORK OUT
Right, Nachi?
Don't be so critical.
They're not good friends!!
I can't tear such good friends apart.
CHEW CHEW
When did you become so heartless?
It makes me sad.
Urgh!
ギリ
GRAB
Kagetora
Tell me...

Don't think you can get me every time.
Heh heh.
SWIRK
Huh?
That's not fair!
PANT PANT
HANG
I have a hostage.
YOUR MONEY!
agura!!
Oh? Fighting amongst yourselves now?
CLAMOR
KYE!?
Don't get caught so easily, Kosuke!
Geez
Too noisy...
FLAP FLAP
KYE
Oh...
スパーンッ
SWISH

Kagetora, you're clapping, too.
OH
Oops...
YAZAMA
I'm sorry, Mother.
It's good that we are having fun.
Don't forget that we are here to see Mother.
CLAP CLAP
CLAP CLAP
.....
Thanks.
Don't worry about Hime-sama.
Well, Hime...
I'll see you later.
DASH
Hime, you can go back to the house with them.
Okay.
Well then! Let me go get Kosuke back.
.....

He's been smiling nonstop since before we got here.
So I thought he must be very happy to see her.
He looked happy just now, too.
Watching Kagetora got me curious.
Huh?
Um... what was she like?
Kureha-san...?
I'm not sure if that's the reason for smiling...
Huh?
OH, I mean...
She was very kind.
And also very strong-willed.
Shirou-san.
Mother spoiled Kagetora the most.
Kagetora used to always go to her crying.
Wah, wah, just like a baby.
Right, Taka?
SMIRK

Because of that, I used to get scolded a lot.
Heh heh
It's not fair!
It's cheating to use ninja arts to run away.
I can't use them yet!
It's perfectly natural to use what you've got.
It's your fault for not knowing them yet!
Before you complain, why don't you attack more?
Urgh...
I won't use any arts this time.
Yah!
SWISH
Hey!!
みし…
THUD

It's your fault for believing the enemy.
You said you wouldn't use ninja arts!
HEH
YOU LIAR'S
WHACK
Gotcha!
Ow!
Mother.
Oh my.
What's all this about?
I told you boys not to fight.
It's a strategy!
It's Brother Taka's fault for not fighting fair

Now, now... don't cry, Kagetora.
You're a ninja, after all.
A Hoorai ninja shouldn't cry so easily.
Yes...
WIPE
Mother is too nice to Kagetora!
He's getting spoiled.
I think it's okay.
He's only a kid.
That's why he's not getting stronger.
He's the over-protective one.
I think.
YEAH, YEAH, I KNOW
NAG
NAG
NAG
If we're not strict, he might get hurt eventually.
Shirou-maru, Taka.
You come, too.
Let's have tea.
I made some ohagi.

Your homemade ohagi?
Yeah!
We'll come.
Well, it is time for a break.
GIGGLE
GIGGLE
GIGGLE...
Was Kureha-san also a ninja?
Huh?
Yeah, but she wasn't called to duty.
She wasn't too strong physically.
Well, our father, Tenshu, had a lot of duties and wasn't home much.
So it was Mother's duty to stay and protect the Kazama household.
Maybe that's why.
All of us grew up very attached to our Mother.

It must have been difficult for Mother...
...to leave little Kagetora behind.
We can joke about it, but...
Huh?
But the most attached is Kagetora!
He's quite the mama's boy.
BROTHER
ZU!
This way.
Mother!
But why does our tree bloom in the winter?
It blossomed beautifully this year.
Yup!
It's for the bark.
Instead of taking it all at once and risking our supplies running out...
...we purposely delayed the growth of this tree.
THE BARK IS USED AS MEDICINE.

Brother Taka, you know everything!
WOW!
If you're going to be a ninja in this household, you need to know these things, too.
DON'T BE IMPRESSED
But... I'm happy to be able to see the flowers bloom in the winter.
It's my favorite flower.
It only blooms for a short period but it's a strong and beautiful flower.
Just looking at it makes me feel better.
I hope next year...
...I can see this bloom with all of you.
SQUEEZE

I just had a feeling you were going away...
What's wrong, Kagetora.
...I don't know.
Kagetora.
What are you talking about? She didn't say that.
You dork.
That's right!
RUFFLE
RUFFLE
Jrgn.
Mother loves the cherry blossoms here.
She wouldn't leave them.
Right, mother?

Why would I leave all of you?
にこっ SMILE
Of course.
I wouldn't go anywhere.
...Yeah...
I can't leave before that happens.
My dream is to watch all of you become great ninjas.
SQUEEZE
I'LL DO IT FOR A CHANGE
Okay! Then off to training we go!!
Yes. Be careful not to get hurt.
Mother, you could go back.
I know it's sunny but it's still cold.
DASH
You always work me hard!
ORING
ORING
わーん WAAAH!
You come, too Taka!
Come on, Kagetora. I'll work you hard.

Our mother was spending more time in bed.
Now that we think about it... we might've known.
I CAN WALK ON MY OWN.
DON'T RUN AWAY
SWING
SWING
YOU'LL RUN AWAY!
And what that meant...
You have high hopes.
NOD
Yup! Kagetora wants the duty as Hime's ninja.
"Duty?"
I'll easily become stronger than you!!
I'll...
URG
But
Only highly skilled ninjas can get that duty.
Someone who can't even use the arts?
YOU'RE WEAKER THAN ME.
It's not high. I'm training hard for it!

Taka...
Please don't hurt your brother.
ぎゅ
PINCH
Agaga.
Is this mouth talking back to me?
Really.
You want that duty?
Kagetora.
So transparent.
!
Are you sure you don't just want to meet the Hime?
I hear she's cute.
SNORT
Yes!
I want to become a strong ninja!
Not true!

Well, it's important to have dreams.
Yup.
A dream is a wish that your heart makes.
When you're fast asleep.
That's why...
Hee hee
To become Hime's ninja means that you're the strongest in the village.
Urgh.
HMPH
I know that I'm still weak...
And I do want to see the Hime.
You're a strong boy, Kagetora.
I know.
Don't worry.

Mother...
So you can do it.
I believe in you.
I know that you train on your own.
And I know that you never give up.
YOU WANT TO CONTINUE?
YUP!!
No matter what happens, you cannot cry.
But remember, Kagetora...
If you want that duty, you need to be strong.
I want you to have a strong spirit.
Even when you're sad...
...you need to smile.

Then, one day...
...you can be a strong ninja to protect Hime-sama.
When you become Hime's ninja...
...I would like to meet her, too.
A strong spirit...
I promise I'll be strong!
Okay!
Geez, I guess he's serious.
.....
Well, it's easier said than done.
Why are you being so mean?
GIGGLE GIGGLE YOU STUPIDHEAD!
.....
...a few weeks after that.
Mother fell ill...
Brother...
Where's father?

That's what being a ninja is all about...
It's okay, Taka.
But that's...
He's in the middle of his duty and cannot return.
I don't think I want to see him cry...
Maybe that's better...
Oh...
Where's Kagetora?
Shirou-maru...
I can't find him.
I can't imagine where he would go at this time...
In the Hoorai...no, in the Kazama tradition.
Even after I'm gone, please become strong ninjas.
Taka...
Shirou-maru.

Please take care of Kagetora...
What about Kagetora? If you're not around...
What are you saying, Mother?
I promise I'll become a ninja that you would be proud of...
It's okay... Kagetora has you two.
Right?
Mother is the one in pain...
Yes.
Taka knows, too.
I know.
We'll keep this promise... no matter what.
TMP
TMP
Yes.
We'll make Kagetora a well-trained ninja. We promise.
Thank you, my sons...
SLIDE
Mother!!

I brought the cherry blossoms you like!
You said this makes you feel better, right?
Kagetora...
The Kazama cherry blossoms...
You went to get that?
Thank you, Kagetora.
Thank you for showing them to me before I go...
No...
No, mother, you can't die!!
I got you the blossoms! You said they'll make you better!
Kagetora...

You're such a crybaby...
Don't cry.
You're a ninja.
I...
...want to see you smile.
But... I told you.
You need to have a strong spirit.
Mother...
...you should be smiling...
Even when you're sad...

...I...
...I won't cry anymore...
...Be strong.
I'll always be watching over you...
...to be smiling, always...
Sorry...
...didn't mean to talk this much.

Hime-sama...
Because...
Why are you crying, Hime-san?
Arg.
SNIFF
.....
We think Mother was happy.
She got to see Kagetora smiling in the end.
Yeah, and he started to train with the strongest old ninja in the village.
Kagetora stopped being a crybaby after that.
If I remember correctly...
Oh.
Kagetora knows that, so that's why he doesn't stop smiling in front of her.
By the way, where is he now?
Leaving Hime-sama alone.
He's probably by the cherry blossoms.
That's right...
I have returned, comrades!!
When he came back, he was talking like the old ninja, too.
That surprised me.
SPIT!
MOON
CONGRATULATIONS

...keep
r promise
o mother
secret?
Can
you...
OH...
Hime-
sama.
Okay.
Oh...then
I'll go look
for him.
Where
is it?
It's
through
the trees
behind the
house.
I think you
can find it.
It
should be
kay to let
him know
now.
think.
Sure!
. . . . . .
We'll
make
Kagetora
a strong
ninja...
GIGGLE
You're so
shy about
these
things!
I know,
I know!
WHACK
WHACK
TREMBLE
Oh!
Well,
maybe
that's true,
but . .
I can't say
Kagetora is
the strongest
just yet.
UPGH
SMACK
I get it...
you're too
embarrassed
for him to
find out.
♪

I'm only kidding!
C'mon.
I see...
Oh, oops...
How do you want to die?
Brother
Huh?
SHNK

I guess I'm still weak-spirited.

I'm sorry...
But one day...
...I'll become a ninja you can be proud of, Mother...
I promised not to cry...
I was able to hold back in front of the grave, but...

How did you find this place?
Oh.
ヒョコッ
PEEP
Kagetora? Are you there?
!
I came to get you.
.....
Oh, um...
Hime?
Kagetora?
Hime...
Everyone's waiting for you.
Let's go!
MISS

Strong enough to protect Hime-sama...
Am I useful enough...
...as your ninja on duty?
SQUEEZE
But that's only because...
...you trained so hard to become a ninja to protect me.
You know what? I was able to do a lot of things because you were here.
TH-THAN

Thank you.
I'm... really glad you're my ninja.

That the Hime I get to protect...
...is a person like her.
Mother...
I'm sure you're happy.
...in Japan.
The best Hime...
Sorry, I'm going to take one.
I know!
Let's take a branch to Kureha-san.
Let's go.
Kagetora.

...Yes!
Please watch over me.
Mother...
...continue protecting her.
So I can...
OF COURSE
YOU THINK SHE'S LIKE IT?

KAGETORA
カゲトラ
#20 New Year's Wish

Phew...
SPLASH
Oof...
SIGH
Okay!
SPLASH

Oooh, it's so cold!
ぶるぶる
TREMBLE

Done with purification!
I need to get ready.
Okay!
SLAP
SLAP

SPLASH
SPLASH
SPLASH
Yeah.
YOU'RE WORKING HARD.
KYE!
PURIFYING YOURSELF?
Today is New Year's Eve.
I need to cleanse myself of this year's impurities.
Phew.

I need to prioritize my duty!
TURN
I THINK TAKA ASKED YOU TO RETURN BEFORE THE YEAR BEGINS...
KYE
I'll go home during the New Year week.
YOU WENT HOME LAST YEAR.
BUT... DON'T YOU HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE VILLAGE?
No matter what...
...I should stay by Hime's side.
Right?
And you know...they say the beginning of the year is important.
MUMBLE
MUMBLE
Kagetora.
No, that's not true!
YOU JUST WANT TO STAY HERE WITH HIME, RIGHT?
Duty is just an excuse.
YOU REALLY WANT TO STAY HERE WITH HIME, RIGHT?
GRASP
UKIKI!
KYE!
FLIP
OH WELL...
But I guess I should expect scolding from Brother Taka.
Plus punishment.

You're going to come with me to visit the shrine, right?
Everyone's going to come tonight to pick us up.
She looks so good in the kimono.
Hime.
We're going early because we're visiting twice.
I'll get ready once I finish purifying myself.
It's the first time we're spending New Year's together, huh?
Hee hee
SMILE

That's true.
TH-THUMP
I GUESS PURIFICATION DOESN'T GET RID OF YOUR DESIRES.
GEEZ
SHUDDER SIGH
Shut up, Kosuke.
Once you're ready, come to the main house, okay?
Yes.
KYE!!
I'm looking forward to it.
KYE
I'm glad I stayed behind.
Visiting the shrine with Hime...
BUZZ
BUZZ

Yup.
Wow, it's crowded.
It's ew Year's Eve.
Can't be helped. is shrine's pretty famous.
The only problem is this crowd.
Wow.
Of course.
Everyone's cute, but Yuki-chan's the cutest.
Spending New Year's with guys only is just sad.
It's nice with girls around.

You need to stay close or you'll get lost.
Kagetora...
You'll know later.
Okay?
SMIRK
OH, RIGHT.
It's Kagetora's first time here.
GONG
Is this a special shrine?
Hime is the cutest.
THEY WAY
What are you looking at, you perverted ninja?
ギクッ
GASP
?
No, I wasn't!
You were looking at her with nasty eyes.
You wanna die?
WHAT'S WRONG?
OH
There goes the New Year's Eve Bell.
Let's go hit it, too.
GONG

Now that she said it, I don't want to do it anymore.
Hey, Kagetora. Go ring the bell. You've got desires!
SWISH
Urgh...
The bell, huh?
Maybe I can get rid of my desires.
I hope...
Hm...
Here I go.
GONG
It feels like my desires are disappearing.
I'm next.
LISTENING TO THIS SOUND...
Go!
GONG

Hime!
Whoa...
PLOP
I'm... I'm very sorry!
DOUGH
No, it's okay
Oops.

My desires are not gone at all!
TH-THUMP
TH-THUMP
Okay, now that that's done, let's go visit the shrine. All right?
Yeah, let's.
I don't know if I'm jealous or happy I'm not Kagetora...
I guess it wasn't on purpose.
I'll get him later.
CLAP
CLAP

I wish that I could spend this year with Hime, too.
Is that your biggest wish?
I hope I can get better at sports and martial arts.
HEH
SERIOUS
Later?
My first, I'll ask for later.
Hmmm. Maybe my second.
But this is the main shrine...
Later?
Let's pull one.
Oh, omikuji!
OMIKUJI
!?

"BELOW AVERAGE FORTUNE" IS NOT THAT COMMON, BUT SOME OMIKUJI HAVE THEM.

WHACK!
!?
That would be behind you.
Bad luck in the north?
I'm not sure if this is good or bad... Good, maybe?
HMM...
Your love life will be very eventful.
Bad luck!!
The fortune's are right!!
SIZZLE
WOW SCARY
ARE YOU OKAY?
It's bad luck!!
HA HA HA You have no control.
Oops, my coin went the way.
TAKE
Hmmm...
Tie it up!!
CRUNCH
The bad luck goes away when I tie them, right? I think...
There's only room at the top
I can't reach..

Kagetora.
Is around here okay?
Thanks...
COLD
Your hands are cold.
Are they? Really?
Yeah.
See?
TOUCH
It's this cold.
SQUEEZE
THUMP THUMP

PHOO
かあっ
BLUSH
How's it now?
A little warmer?
ニコッ
SMILE
Um, yeah, I'm okay now!
Really? Good.
SWING
SWING
Maybe I should go ring the bell again...
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
Hey, we're gonna go eat New Year's soba.
Right.

Phew, I'm stuffed.
That was good. ♡
It warms your whole body up.
SOBA
Phew
The tea warms you up, too.
.....
GRRK

There's a small shrine up at the top of the mountain.
You can see the sun rise from there.
What are we doing?
We'll make up for last year!
Okay, now that we're full, let's go to the main event!
There's a long flight of steps to the top.
Why?
But it's not that easy.
I couldn't do it last year.
So we're going to see that.
I see.
Wow, then there are probably many who can't see it.
Which means you have a limited time to climb the stairs.
...thirty minutes before sunrise.
Plus, you can't leave for the top until...
So this is what she was talking about.
I'll ask for my first later...
...if you make it before sunrise, your wish will come true!
Oh, but...

We told you it's a pretty famous shrine.
Everyone tries to get to the top.
This year I'll make it and ask for a girlfriend!!
That's right!
Idiots.
Are you going to try it too, Hime?
Yeah!
I want to see the sunrise.
And...
...I want my wish to come true...
Huh?
Oh, it's nothing. Let's work hard, Kagetora!!
Sure.
CHATTER
CHATTER

ドーン
DOOM

This is an amazing flight of stairs.
I know.
That's why so many fail.

Wow. People get into it.
STRETCHING
BUZZ
BUZZ
There are a lot of people.
I hear your wish really does come true.
But...
GLANCE
I'm going to make it this year!
Okay.
I wonder if Hime will be okay.
LET'S WORK HARD
I should help her in every way!
Okay!
We will ring the bell.
Is everyone ready? It's almost time.

GO!!
GO!!
GO!!
Hime! Just tell me when you need a hand.
Kagetora.
No thanks.
I want to get up there on my own!
キリッ
STARE
Hime...
DARARARARESSHI
AI AI AI

Let me go!
Ono come back down with me!
TUGGGG
I'll make it after a break.
Go ahead.
Sorry, I give up.
Bu still...
Hmm...
Yeah...
Hime... are you really okay?
People are dropping everywhere.
It's amazing.

Let me rest a bit...
ぺたん
SIT
I think it's a little tough for you.
But...
It's almost time for sunrise.
And...
!
Then I need to get going.
ZIP
Hime!
TAP
Oh...
WOBBLE

Hime!
ZZT
Urgh.
Looks like I can't make it again this year...
Huh!?
I'll take you there./
LIFT
I'll make Hime's wish come true!!
Hold on tight!
DASH
Kagetora!?

What's that!?
A ninja!?
SWOOSH
JUMP
SWOOSH
Geez...
It's New Year's... I don't want to end it with Hime's sad face!
Hey... Kagetora!
I can go on my...

It looks like we made it before sunrise.
We did, but...
I guess she's mad...
Can't help it.
I told you I'd get here on my own...
BOO
I'm sorry.
I acted against your will.
But I really wanted you to see the sunrise!

!
SHINE
!
Sunrise...
It's... my first time seeing the sunrise from here...
I've always wanted to see it...
I'm happy I was able to.

Look.
It's so pretty!!

But I'm happier that...
...I'm here to see it with you, Kagetora!

It...
...sure is...
My Hime...
Right?
This way.
Huh?
We need to visit the shrine.
Oh yeah!
You made it, too.
You need to ask for a wish.
My wish...

...to be happy forever...
!
.....
Hime...
My wish is for...
Sigh.
We finally made it.
I guess we didn't make it again this year.
Pant pant
You made it for sunrise?
Yup.
So you were able to make a wish.
What did you wish for?
What...
GLANCE
GLANCE

Heh heh.
You're the ninja!
I can't believe you made it.
Even carrying someone.
Um...
It's a secret!
Let's go, Yuki.
Leave the idiots.
Okay.
Giggle giggle
Man, we worked so hard to get up here.
True.
Stop being idiots. Let's go.
We saw the sun.
ME, TOO.
I DIDN'T MAKE IT, BUT I WANT A GIRLFRIEND.
YOU GUYS ARE EMBARRASSING ME.
Secret?
Oh well.

I'm glad I was able to spend New Year's...
...with Hime...
Hime...
.....
Aren't you going?
Right!
I forgot to say something.
Ha ha
Oh, um...
!
くるっ
TURN
TH-THUMP

You too!
To be continued in volume five.

Bonus Page

This is **Segami**. Thanks to you, we are at Volume 4. This time the Bonus Page is only one page, so there are no 4-panel comics. *(laugh)* I'll just talk about random stuff.

About Ninjas- Part 4

I went to Togakushi. I went up the flight of stairs and was tired by the time I got to the Kid's Ninja Village. There were no kids. But I did get to see the mechanic house and stuff. It must've been a weird sight to see a grown-up play. It's okay because there weren't that many people. *(laugh)* I also went to other places related to ninjas. And of course, I worked at night at the hotel. I wonder why I work so hard to travel.

About Traveling

I went to Kanazawa. There was a lot of snow. Of course I visited the Ninja Temple, but my main purpose for traveling was crab. I ate it. I ate so much. I think I won't have crab for a while...When I returned from Kanazawa I went to Kyoto. (This was for gathering pictures). I went to the Movie Village and met some actors. It looks like they are in a famous drama series. Even if they are only in it to be killed off. When I watch it, I should look out for them. *(laugh)*

About Weapons - Part 2

My weapon collection has increased. Of course, they are important materials necessary for my work. But the problem is where to put all of it. Currently it is spread out in my workspace. My work area is looking more and more fishy.

About Traveling, my excuse

Writing about the places I go makes it look like I'm out and about playing around. But really, it's mostly for work!! I take many pictures to use as resources! I don't take any pictures of myself! Although that sounds sad, too. Maybe next time I should take at least one of myself.

Thanks

Thank you for all your letters. It takes a while but I do write back. So for those of you waiting, please watch out for it! By the way, S-san. Thank you for the very cute card. I know raising a child is tough, but please continue to work hard! I am rooting for you! Other people. I know work and studying are tough, but please keep at it!! I will work hard, too! Even if I take breaks to go travel.

SMIRK

Special Thanks

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瀬上彰良 Akira Segami

We'll see you in Volume Five.
♪
WE'LL LEAVE THOSE TWO DOGS TO BLOOD
Your bad personality is also featured here...
In this volume...
TOO SCARED TO SAY ANYTHING
UGH
Kagetora... you're so weak when it comes to the ladies.
Especially in this volume...
ARE YOU REALLY A HOOKUP NINJA?

About the Author

Segami's first manga was published by Shogakukan in 1996. He went on to do a few other small projects, including two short stories entitled "Kagetora" in 2001 and 2002. The character proved to be popular with fans, so Segami began his first ongoing series, *Kagetora*, with Kodansha in 2003. The series continues to run today.

Translation Notes

Japanese is a tricky language for most Westerners, and translation is often more art than science. For your edification and reading pleasure, here are notes on some of the places where we could have gone in a different direction in our translation of the work, or where a Japanese cultural reference is used.

Sake, author note

Although known in the United States as a Japanese rice wine commonly ordered at sushi restaurants, the Japanese use the term "sake" for anything that is alcoholic. The rice wine is properly known as "Nihonshu" or "Ponshu" for slang. ("Pon" is from "Nippon," which is one way to pronounce "Japan" in Japanese.)

Watermelon Cracking, page 14

Watermelon Cracking is a popular game the Japanese play at the beach. As with a piñata, a person is blindfolded and tries to hit the watermelon. After someone successfully cracks the watermelon, they are supposed to eat it. But usually the watermelon gets sandy, so people who intend to eat it put a plastic sheet underneath.

Cavalry Battle, Page 22

Cavalry Battle used to be a common event at Japanese schools during Field Day. Because of the difficulty of the event, it is usually done by fifth graders and older. It is a game where three or four people make a horse, and the lightest person becomes the warrior on the horse. The warriors are divided into two groups, and they battle each other. The group with the most warriors still standing at the end wins. The rules vary, but in younger grades, kids fight to take the hat a warrior is wearing. Due to the potential danger of this event, Japanese schools rarely have it anymore. But before all the lawsuits, this event was highly popular and usually held toward the end of Field Day.

Fireworks, Page 33

In Japan, people can play with fireworks any day during the summer. This is why Kagetora and his friends can play with fireworks at the resort. Fireworks are also sold virtually anywhere, such as department stores, supermarkets, and convenience stores.

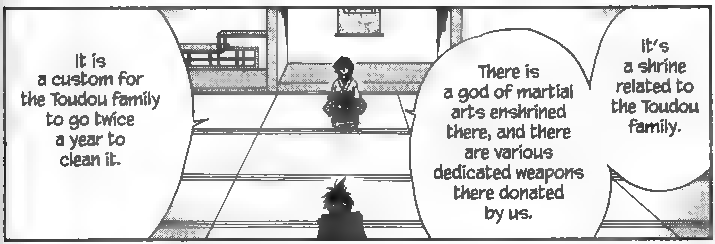
Mouse Tail Fireworks, Page 33

Mouse tail fireworks act the same way as the American firework, Ground Spinners. They are named as such because the Japanese versions are shaped like a mouse tail—unlike the Ground Spinners, which are cylindrical in shape.

Tamaya, Page 33

Japanese people say *Tamaya* when a big firework goes up. This is a tradition originating from the Edo Period when two firework makers known as Tamaya and Kagiya competed to make the best fireworks. The two would set off fireworks and yell out their names *Tamaya!* and *Kagiya!* every time their work went up.

Dedicated Weapons, Page 40


It is a custom for the Toudou family to go twice a year to clean it.
There is a god of martial arts enshrined there, and there are various dedicated weapons there donated by us.
It's a shrine related to the Toudou family.

Saya mentions some weapons dedicated to the shrine. This is done to pay respect to the gods, or to amuse them. Usually a weapon of a famous warrior (i.e. an important general) is dedicated.

Miko, Page 41

Yuki is wearing a *Miko* outfit. A *miko* is a shrine maiden. Modern miko perform ceremonial dances or assist priests in wedding ceremonies.

Drinking Age, Page 48

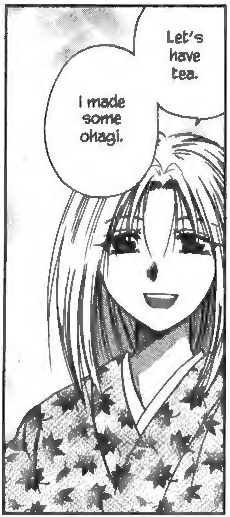
In Japan, the legal drinking age is 20.

Aiki Jujitsu, Page 81

Aiki Jujitsu is a Japanese martial art, in which artists use the attacker's force and redirect it against them.

Ohagi, Page 123

Ohagi is a Japanese sweet dish made with sweet rice and covered with red beans. It is also known as *botamochi*, but the Japanese call it *botamochi* when it is eaten in the spring. *Ohagi* is the name for this dish when it is eaten in the fall.



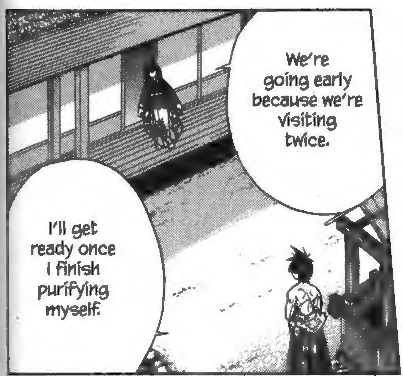
Purification, Page 149

Purification is usually done in the river or the ocean to wash off the impurities and sins. This allows them to literally flow away. But since going into the river or ocean is not practical, Yuki and Kagetora are doing it with plain water.

New Year's, Page 151

During the New Year, people will typically go home to spend time with their family. Kagetora is supposed to go home to his Hoorai house, but instead he decides to stay in Tokyo with Yuki. The New Year is celebrated from New Year's Eve until the third day of the New Year.

Visiting Twice, Page 152



Yuki here is referring to *ninen-mairi*, which is the act of visiting the shrine before and after the New Year. They will pay a visit once before midnight, and then again when the New Year begins. Young people or people who don't have kids are typically the ones who will do this. Families will usually wait until the morning of the New Year to visit the shrine. Either way, famous shrines will be crowded with people.

New Year's Eve Bell, Page 155

On New Year's Eve, the shrines ring the bell 108 times. This comes from a Buddhist belief that man has 108 desires, and by listening to the calm sound of the bell, we can get rid of them.

Omikuji, Page 160

Omikuji are fortunes written on thin strips of paper. They are sold at temples and shrines. Japanese people will usually buy one on New Year's Day to see what kind of fortune they will have for the year. Ono is shaking something in the background, which is a container of bamboo sticks. One will come out of the hole in the container, which will have a number on it. You take a slip of paper from one of the drawers with your number. *Omikuji* fortunes range from Good to Bad in six to seven levels.

New Year's Soba, Page 163

Japanese people eat soba, or buckwheat noodles, on New Year's Eve. Buckwheat noodles are very long and thin, which has led to the belief that if one eats these noodles they will have a long and prosperous life.

Togakushi, Page 183

Togakushi is an area in Japan with a famous ninja village. They have a museum and the mechanical house Segami talks about.

Kanazawa, Page 183

Kanazawa is located in the western region of Japan. The Ninja Temple Segami talks about is properly known as Myoryuji Temple. There are escape routes, hidden chambers, secret tunnels, and trick doors.

Kyoto, Page 183

Kyoto is the former capital of Japan, located in the western region. The Movie Village Segami talks about is a movie set open to the public. (Think of it like Universal Studios.) Toei, one of Japan's top film production companies, runs it.

FAMILY AFFAIRS

Noble ninja Kagetora has an important duty: to protect and train young Yuki. Falling in love with her is not an option; unfortunately, it's a little too late for that. Things get *really* complicated when Yuki's cousin, a respected member of the Toudou martial arts family, comes to town to check out Kagetora . . . and she likes what she sees!

Then Kagetora takes Yuki back home to his village, where she learns Kagetora's family secrets, bringing the two of them even closer.

With the New Year approaching, can Kagetora keep his feelings for his charge under control . . . and keep from disgracing himself and his ninja clan?

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